



Bikespace

Impact Report 2021  
MOMENTUM FOR THE PEOPLE



# Bikespace Impact Report 2021

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# Introduction

Bikespace is moving into 2022 full of optimism for our city with several exciting projects in the pipeline that will make Plymouth an even nicer place to live!

Highlights for us in 2021 have been the Datacargo project working with 'The Data Place', Time to Shine funded by the Rank Foundation; and our 'Women into Cycling' project funded by Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival.

We have also continued our partnership with Plymouth City Council delivering their Plymotion Project while our core activity – working with young people has remained the backbone of Bikespace with fully subscribed sessions every week throughout the year.

We have even had a visit from our MP, Luke Pollard who was kind enough to spend some time with a group of our students.

Something that has made us all really proud is hearing from adults who came through our ESF funded project in 2020. We have heard from five of the participants who all got in touch to let us know that they are now in full time employment. There is a real sense that we helped these people through a really challenging time in their lives. I would like to say a big thank you to Aj and the team who delivered this project.

Thank you for all your support in 2021!

**Gareth Thomas** Founder



## What We Do

Bikespace is a not-for-profit social enterprise. We exist to improve our community and we have chosen to do this using the bicycle!

Our core activity is supporting young people outside of mainstream education by providing vocational training.

We have increased our offer to provide training opportunities for vulnerable adults and we partner with Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support to provide bicycles and support for refugees.

Our commercial activities include operating a busy bicycle repair workshop and providing logistical support to business.

Plymouth's has a growing Cargo Bike market, which we are very excited to be able to play a significant part in that through the sale of new Cargo Bikes, to businesses and the general public.

### Quote from one of our beneficiaries:

*"I had an excellent day, learnt a lot, long time bike enthusiast, cycled since 1960's. Great project, staff, style and premises excellent, have told many people about it, well done excellent use of funds."*



## Our Mission

To provide training opportunities  
and affordable, healthy transport  
for people of all ages!

# 2021 The Headlines

Bikes Recycled

149

Young People  
12 supported

...each receiving

200 hours of  
training and  
education annually



# 2021 The Headlines

Bikes recycled / repaired  
for our community **778**

**54** Open workshop  
sessions provided for  
people

Adults trained on  
Saturday courses **43**

**11** Cargo bikes loaned  
for 2 months to  
businesses



# Data Cargo Project

## Partnership with The Data Place

Bikespace is part of a national pilot to trial electric cargo bikes to speed up and green up local goods deliveries.

Working with The Data Place we were able to create a project that featured a number of local creative businesses that have signed up to participate in the pilot.

The prototype was created with a set of sensors that fit into each bike and capture a range of data as the bikes travel the city, resulting in numerous data products that can inform urban planning and help bike users plan journeys better.

The data that has been collected includes:

- Distance travelled
- Road conditions
- Environmental information to understand air quality
- Temperatures.

The potential use of the data is extremely exciting and available for people to use in ways that support their own projects.

Bikespace is very pleased to play a part in this data collection project.

## Quote from The Data Place:

*"Data isn't everybody's thing, so we'll be generating lots and lots of information about anything we can build a sensor for, but people will see other things that people will build with that data. Maybe the Council will want it to inform what they do with road conditions or air quality, but other people might want to make music from it, or cool maps or visualisations."*





## Education – Young People

Our core activity, working with young people, has continued to go from strength to strength. Our sessions have been full throughout the year and it has been a real pleasure working with the young people and seeing them grow up. We have stayed in touch with our year 11 pupils that left in July and it is great seeing the current pupils developing their skills and enjoying their time at Bikespace.

In October Luke Pollard visited us at Bikespace and got the chance to talk politics and digital media with some of our students.


Luke has been a great supporter of Bikespace and was very keen to meet with the young people and hear their stories about their journey to Bikespace. We were able to explain the impact the work they have been doing has had on their lives.

We have our first 'post 16' young person with us as part of a partnership we have formed with 'Eat That Frog'.

This particular young person was really excited to hear from Luke following his visit, Luke had some really positive feedback on some of the skate films he has produced with friends!

Quote from one of our beneficiaries on meeting Luke:

*"I wasn't sure what it would be like meeting Luke but we got chatting and it turned out he knew all about digital media. I like making skateboarding films and I sent some to Luke after we saw him and he replied and gave me lots of tips on my filming. It was good to find out what an MP does too."*

A photograph of two cyclists riding on a paved path through a park. The cyclist in the foreground is wearing a blue jacket and a black helmet, smiling. The cyclist in the background is wearing a purple long-sleeve shirt and a blue helmet. They are surrounded by large, leafy trees. In the foreground, there is a black bicycle rack with several empty slots.

“We exist to improve our community and we have chosen to do this using the bicycle”



# Plymotion Project Work

We have continued to work in partnership with Plymouth City Council to deliver the cycle maintenance element of their DfT funded 'Plymotion' project. We provide a range of activities and services all at no cost to the people taking part.

We have delivered Saturday Maintenance Courses to 43 participants from June onwards.

We have delivered Open Access Workshop Sessions to 54 people from May onwards.

We have delivered Dr Bike at Your Workplace Events to the following organisations...

- Crownhill Police Station (2 visits)
- Charles Cross Police Station (2 visits)
- Babcock (3 visits)
- Sherford
- Plymouth University (2 visits)
- Tulgey Woods
- Derriford
- PML
- Centrica Langage power station

Through a combination of these events and additional work carried out in our workshop we have been able to service and repair 445 bikes through this programme.

## Quote from one of our beneficiaries:

*"I am writing to say how impressed I am by Bikespace and the Plymotion project. It is a marvellous way to encourage more people to use bikes. I took my bike with the intention of donating it to Bikespace, as I had been told it wasn't safe to ride. Bikespace explained they could make it safe. I was delighted with the work that was done; the gear cables were replaced, the brakes were made safe and fitted with new brake pads, and the bike thoroughly checked. I am so grateful for Plymotion and The Bikespace*



# Cycling UK Big Bike Revival

Funding from Cycling UK enabled Bikespace to run a range of targeted programmes, events and activities to encourage more people to ride a bike.

## Women Into Cycling

During the summer of 2021 we ran a series of rides encouraging women to go for a bike ride. These rides were local and informal and we had some great feedback from women who had not cycled for a while and were excited to get back on their bikes. This project was funded through Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival Programme.

## BBR Workshops

The funding was also used to deliver a number

of events to help people fix their bikes and build confidence to ride more often.

The series of events took place at the Village Hub, Onward House and Devon and Cornwall Refugee Support. These events were a mixture of Dr Bike sessions and workshop training for the organisation's participants.

## Quote from one of our beneficiaries:

*"I had the time of my life with Bikespace today. Once a month, they organise bike rides in Plymouth, and today we cycled along some really beautiful scenic routes. They also offer free bike workshops and fix bikes as well. Looking to buy a second-hand bike, maybe? Bikespace has got you. You guys are the best!"*



## Rank Foundation – Time To Shine

The Rank Foundation's Time to Shine programme has been a brilliant opportunity for Bikespace to take on a new employee to support the expansion of operations by taking on the Bikespace Cargo project.

Bikespace Cargo has brought sustainable, zero emissions deliveries by Cargo bike to Plymouth. With the support from Rank, Bikespace has been able to employ a dedicated member of staff to support the growth of this area of work.

Corran has been a brilliant addition to the team. She has learnt many new transferable skills and has an important part in developing a growth area at Bikespace.

Rank has also provided additional support throughout the year in the form of public speaking and growth mindset and Corran had support in the form of action learning sets which

were an invaluable resource during the year as a Time to Shine leader.

Rank also provided a bursary which Corran was able to use for both personal and professional development. For example Corran took on a sales course which she would not have been able to do without the support from Rank.

Throughout the year Corran has been able to establish an alternative option for people to receive goods in the city. People are looking for more sustainable ways to live their lives and cargo bike deliveries really fits this need.

With the help of council led schemes, we have been supplying businesses and families in Plymouth with cargo bikes. The increase in visibility of these bikes within the city helps people realise they are a real, practical alternative to the family car or work van.

### Quote from Corran:

*"It has been quite a volatile time for taking on a new role, Rank really stepped up to offer a variety of ways to get involved, whether that be face-to-face when possible, or online. There was also a reliable team of people available for support should I need it. I learnt a lot about myself and my abilities during both courses – I learnt to really push myself out of my comfort zone and about persistence and practice being key in both."*

# Update from 2020

In 2020 we ran an ESF funded programme aimed at adults. In 2021 we started to see the impact of the project. Please read below a case study from this project.

"I had to leave work in 2015 due to mental health illness. In 2020 I met the team at Bikespace and they invited me to join a bike maintenance course.

At first I was very hesitant but AJ helped me overcome that hesitation. The very first day I attended the course I was shaking and sick with nerves and upset stomach.

I very nearly didn't go. I had not been around people for five years. After the first few sessions I gradually felt less scared and more comfortable at being around others. By the end of the course I had realised that I could indeed, be around others and cope OK at least for short periods of time – maybe I could work again one day.

That gave me the boost I needed to start to look at working again. In October 2021 I got a permanent job offer and I now work between 12–20 hours a week

My life has turned around. I am so much more confident and am making a wonderful recovery and I'm making a real difference at work and feeling valued. If it wasn't for Bikespace, and specifically AJ, making the big effort to help me in those first steps, I believe I would still be unemployed and too scared and ill to enjoy my life properly."



# Funding Success

## Rank Foundation Recovery Fund

Early in 2021 we were successful in being awarded a grant from the Rank Foundation to support us through a period of recovery through Covid. The grant covered helped us with our core costs for three months and ensured our financial stability throughout this challenging time.

## UK Youth COVID Relief

We were extremely proud of the way our team navigated Covid during 2020 and were especially proud that we were able to get the young people from Bikespace back into the workshop having missed only a few weeks of training in April and May.

However, one element of our project that had suffered was taking the young people on Mountain Bike Adventures. These rides had stopped throughout Covid and the equipment we had was limited and in poor condition through lack of use and maintenance.

We were extremely fortunate to receive funding from UK Youth to enable us to purchase a small fleet of new Mountain Bikes and also to bring on board an external coach for a number of sessions meaning we could take the young people on trips but give the option to remain in the workshop to those who felt safest there.

## EST Grant (Five eCargo Bikes 40% funded)

We were successful in a bid to the Energy Saving Trust to be awarded 40% of the cost of five eCargo bikes. This has allowed us to expand our range of eCargo bikes with a view to developing a programme of try before you buy events promoting the use of sustainable transport in our city.

Our range of bikes now includes a very large delivery trike and a range of family bikes.



Our Mission is to provide training opportunities and affordable, healthy transport for people of all ages!





# Cargo Bike Loan Scheme

## Cargo Bike Loan Scheme

The Cargo Bike Loan Scheme has been a great opportunity to show the city how Cargo bikes offer a zero emissions alternative to diesel van deliveries. It increases the use of the cycle infrastructure in the city and encourages the council to make improvements to make cycling safer, which in turn encourages more people to cycle, making the city more livable and safer for everyone.

Bikespace received funding from Plymouth City Council's Plymotion project to deliver the Cargo Bike Loan Scheme. This scheme has allowed Bikespace to loan out two cargo bikes, an Urban Arrow Cargo and an Urban Arrow Shorty, to businesses for two months at a time, free of charge.

The loan also comes with branded boards for each business and has been really well received. This year the bikes have been loaned to:

- CFS Services
- Plymouth Food - Sustenance Project
- University of Plymouth
- Family Foraging Kitchen
- FreeRadical Creations
- Rise Bakery
- Jabulani Kitchen
- Take A Part
- The Peninsula Trust
- Cosmic Kitchen
- Mark Moss Plumbing
- Mossy Makes

## Quote from Loan Scheme Participant:

*"In a nut shell the loan scheme has helped both my personal life by adding ease to commutes such as shopping & even move house without having to recharge or spend on a van but most importantly it's helped both me & my community orientated business connect with others, so many people are really happy to see the bike, quite amazed actually & that's a brilliant conversation starter which enabled me to share my offer to lend a hand if needed whilst boasting about the growing social business sector here in Plymouth!"*



# Our Future Plans

## Mobility Hubs

One of our biggest undertakings in 2021 has been to forge a partnership with Beryl CC to submit a bid to Plymouth City Council to operate the eBike strand of their Mobility Hubs project. The great news is that we have been successful and 2022 will see us planning the mobilisation of the project due to roll out early in 2022.

The scheme features 400 eBikes which we will be responsible for looking after on the ground and we are really excited to be expanding our team to deliver a high quality project that will change how we travel in our city.

## Rank Foundation Time 2 Shine – Volunteer Programme

Tom is joining us through the Rank Foundation's Time to Shine programme and will be developing a project encouraging volunteers to get involved with Bike Recycling at Bikespace.

Welcome aboard Tom!

## Quote: Dave Lane Non Executive Director - Bikespace

*The future of Bikespace is genuinely exciting, it has always been a brilliant organisation to be involved with as the impact of the work is very clear to see.*

*Upcoming projects in development are focusing on combating loneliness and isolation as well as making cycling more accessible to the public. I believe Bikespace will have a big impact on how people view cycling in urban environments, which can only be a good thing!"*



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